



## The Gospel of Mark | Mark 14:1-11 May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Good morning everybody, good to be in the word again. And what I want to do is, is I want to ask you to turn with me to Mark 14, Mark 14. And I want to read to you the first 11 verses this morning beginning in Mark 14:1: "It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, for they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people." And while he was at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. There were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment wasted like that? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they scolded her. But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

This is God's word to us this morning. Let's pray together. Lord, please give grace to us now as we study your word, help us to see the beauty of Jesus in order that we might genuinely love and be devoted to him. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

When you look at this text, I want you to see something really important here. We're moving in now to the last couple of chapters. Mark 14, 15, 16. This is the end of our study of the Gospel of Mark, and these chapters tell us all the events that lead up to, and then the events of, the crucifixion and the death and the burial and resurrection of Jesus. And this story today is a typical Markan sandwich. Now we've talked about that before. Mark is the author, and so we call it Markan. And it's a sandwich story in the fact that the story begins with one kind of story taking place, and then suddenly moves to a different story, and then it ends by coming back to the story that got told at the beginning. So, the story in verses one and two, then wrap up in verses 10 and 11. And so there's this story in between, and the story that it begins with is about the betrayal of Jesus, and it ends with the betrayal of Jesus. In the middle is this story that really provides the key to understanding the whole thing, and what it is, is it's a story about this woman and her drastic act of devotion to Jesus, and then what we find on the outside of this are these drastic acts of betrayal and hatred of Jesus. So, the love

and devotion of this woman is contrasted by this despisement and betrayal of Judas Iscariot, alright? So this is a story about genuine love and devotion to Jesus, and it forces each one of us to examine the genuineness of our own love and devotion to Jesus. This is a very important story for us. So, begin in verse one where it says that it was a couple of days before the Passover feast. Ah, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Now the Passover was the greatest celebration in Israel, and it took place every year around April, and it commemorated for them, the deliverance in which God had come with a mighty hand and delivered them out of Egyptian captivity. Israel had been slaves held captive in Egypt for 400 years, and during the Passover, God was remembered as the mighty deliverer of Israel. God came back to grab hold of Israel, literally, in a sense, and drag them out from underneath the oppression of the Egyptians. And when he did that, he told them they should commemorate that year after year after year. And so, they do that during what's called the Passover. And it's a remembrance for them. A time of remembering that God delivered them by passing over their houses because of the sacrificial lamb whose blood was put on the door posts and their firstborn son was kept safe, as the Angel of death passed through the land. But the Angel of death took the firstborn son of the Egyptians. And so, they remember this during the Passover. Also comes with that, this Feast of Unleavened Bread. Now, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was something that took place right after the Passover was commemorated with the Passover meal. Then for the next seven days came the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And that was a time in which they remembered that when they left Egypt, they left in such a hurry that the dough didn't even have time to rise. And so, this was a time in which they cleaned all the yeast out of their homes. And it was a time of remembering purity in a sense; how yeast would infect everything. And so, they cleaned it all out, and it was a time to remember purity. And so, this is the setting for this, and in the midst of this setting, notice that it says that the chief priests and the scribes, now these were the leaders of Israel in the Sanhedrin who we've seen, this was the Jewish ruling council. And they're plotting how to kill Jesus. And they're plotting to do this in secret, because during the Passover celebration, Israel, all of Israel, had to come to Jerusalem. And when they came to Jerusalem the city would swell. The population would go up by five times as many people. And because you can imagine this is a time where they're thinking about God delivered us from oppressors who were foreigners, and now we're in our own land and were being oppressed by these foreigners, the Romans. There was this sense in which the Romans became uneasy and they said, wait a minute. There could be an uproar at any given moment. And so, the Romans sent in extra people, extra soldiers, to keep things in order. And because Jesus was popular throughout Israel, not with the religious leaders, but with the populace, with the crowds, there was this idea that you know, if we come and arrest this man and take him away and kill him, we might have an uproar on our hands. If we have an uproar on our hands, then that means that the Romans are going to swoop in, they're going to put it down and it's going to be violent. And so, they don't want this. And so, they're trying to figure out how to do this in secret. And it's fascinating that we see this term they were 'seeking' how, this is in the imperfect tense means that it's a continuous thing. They're just constantly trying to figure out how do we do this?

So, in the midst of this, we come to verse number three and it tells us that, and while he was in Bethany, so while the scheming is going on, alright? Jesus is in Bethany and that's where he's staying every night, we've seen this, this is just a couple of miles from

Jerusalem. He comes into Jerusalem and he goes back to Bethany. And so, he's been in the temple. He's been teaching. We've gone through the Olivet Discourse, at night he's out in Bethany, and he's staying there in the house of Simon the leper. Now Simon was a common name throughout Israel, and so this is a way of designating which Simon are you talking about? He calls him Simon the leper. Now the thing is that Simon at this moment isn't probably a person who has leprosy. Leprosy is gone from him at this point. Otherwise, he wouldn't be hosting a party in his house, alright? So, he's had leprosy and it's gone. In fact, it could have been that Jesus cured him of leprosy in the past, and that's how he developed this relationship with him, to host a meal from in his home. But he's designated as Simon the leper. That's how everybody would know who this guy actually is. And so he's hosting this meal, and it says that Jesus is reclining at the table, and this is a Greco Roman style way of eating where you reclined on your left elbow, there was a low table that was sitting there, and your legs were kind of out back behind you, and everybody kind of reclined in this fashion. So, he's reclining there, and suddenly in the middle of this, it says that a woman came, and she comes with an alabaster flask filled with ointment of pure nard. Now John's gospel tells us that this woman is actually Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Now we're not told this in Mark's gospel, Mark isn't so concerned with who she is as much as he wants the focus to be on what she does; not who she is, but what she does. And for her to walk into this meal, you have to understand this is a complete breach of etiquette. Women didn't come into the setting of Jewish men eating unless they were simply serving tables. And so, to come in, and to insert yourself into the middle of this event in which these Jewish men are gathered around eating and talking and reclining together, was a total breach of etiquette. She should not have done this, but she does. And it shows once again that Jesus isn't so concerned with all of these rules of etiquette that the rest of Israel seem to be concerned with. And it comes that, she comes into the room, and says that she has an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard. And then he says on top of that, that it was very costly. And so, it's like Mark is heaping up these terms trying to communicate, he's going out of his way to tell us the value of this ointment. Now pure nard was an oil that was extracted from a very rare herb that grew in the northern part of India. It was very costly. It was a sweet-smelling perfume. And so, it's in this alabaster flask and to see how expensive it was, everyone knew how costly this was, verse five says specifically that this ointment could have been sold for more than 300 dinarii. Now dinarii was, denarius, one denarius, that's the average wage for a day laborer. So, to talk about 300 dinarii, this is almost a year's worth of income contained in this flask, and she brings this in, and she breaks it and pours it all over Jesus.

Now for the most part, you have to understand that women were excluded from having careers that would have allowed them to earn this much money. I mean, she wouldn't have been able to afford this on her own, and so this is probably a family heirloom, in a sense. This is something that was probably given to her that was handed down and so, in one sense then it has some sentimental value because it was an heirloom that probably came from her family, her parents even. But you have to understand that even more than that, this represented then for her, her future and her security. This is probably one of those things that was handed down to say, if things get really bad, you will have this. This will get you by for a full year if it has to. And so, this is probably her most valuable and precious possession that she owns or could even possibly dream of owning. Now her actions then demonstrate something to us in

that she is looking at this thing that she holds in her hand, saying, this is my future and security, and this is the most valuable thing I have. And when she comes and breaks this and dumps it on Jesus, she is saying, you know, I think actually, my future and security is not going to be found in this alabaster jar anymore. It's going to be found in him. And she breaks it on him and in doing so communicates that he is more valuable. He's the most precious thing in her life. Notice she didn't just pour out some of this. She broke the flask, which means that you can't stuff this back in. This flask is broken, and she dumps it all on his head. Now, anointing someone's head with oil at the beginning of a festival like this was a normal thing to do. But you have to understand, I mean, you just came, and you put a little dab on someone, and everybody smelled really good. And it added to the festivities, and it was exciting. But to break this, well you know, an alabaster flask was about 12 ounces. If you think about going to buy a bottle of perfume at the mall, you go to the mall and you buy a bottle of perfume and it comes standard at about 3.2 ounces of perfume. It's so you can get it on the airplane, right? Think about if somebody took 3.2 ounces of a brand-new bottle of perfume and dumped the whole thing on your head, what that would be like. Now imagine 12 ounces dumped on your head. This drenches him from head to toe. His whole body is drenched in this. It would have been a display that would have captured every sense of the people around the room, that their, their sense of smell would have instantly been engaged. I mean it would have taken over the whole room. Their sense of sight would have been engaged as they see Jesus dripping from head to toe in this oil. Everything about this was a very extravagant scene to behold. And so, these actions create understandably, a pretty graphic response from the people who were there. Look at what it says in verse number four, now there were some who said to themselves, not to Jesus and not to the woman, but they said it to each other, indignantly, why was this ointment wasted like that? Notice those at the banquet in Matthews version of this in chapter 26 tells us that it's his own disciples who say this, they're led by Judas in this regard. They become indignant and they scold her. Mark actually uses a very strong language here to say that they were furious. The NIV translates it, they rebuked her harshly. This comes from a Greek word that literally means 'to flare the nostrils.' You ever seen a bull in a bullfight? And it's pawing at the ground and its nostrils are flaring. This is what they're telling us, is the disciples were looking at this and they were so mad that their nostrils were flaring as they looked at this. And their opinion as they see this, that they're so mad about this, that they begin to scold her and it's again, it's used in a continuous sense. It's like it's an ongoing action. They won't let up; they're just berating this poor woman. Why did you do such a thing? Why would you do that? I can't believe she did that! And they're just going on and on and on. You've seen this, I'm sure in some setting where somebody finally has to step in and say, hey man, enough. It's enough. Leave him alone. They just continue to go on and on.

You know, why were they so angry with her? Well it's not because she interrupted the party. It's not really because she made a mess. It's because, in their opinion, she has wasted this ointment. It is costly, and they say it could have been sold for more than 300 denarii and given to the poor. You know, it's questionable as to whether or not they would have actually given that to the poor. In fact, John's gospel tells us that Judas is the one who's behind that question. And it tells us specifically that Judas was the one who was in charge of the money that the disciples had and that he often stole from that money. And so, what's really going on is that probably Judas is the one

instigating this conversation because he's thinking now we could have sold that, had 300 denarii and I could have stolen some of that. And so that's really what's going on. But here's the thing. Whatever their motives are, whatever we have to think about with their motives, it really doesn't matter, because the bottom line is that they regard what she has done as wasteful. And in doing this, they are not only demeaning the woman and her gift, but the truth is, is that they're demeaning Jesus, because they're saying something, in essence, that Jesus you are not worthy of such a gift. You are not worthy of this gift. Now the world, I want you to think about this, the world has no problem with devotion to Jesus as long as it's done in moderation. Isn't that the way it is? I mean, think about this. If you work really hard and you spend all your time and energy and money on yourself in ways that even could be extravagant, we could say, you know, no one will say, well, that's wasteful. Nobody says that. Instead, you know what they say? They say, ah that's well deserved. And think about if you did this with your kids, right? If you spent all of your time and energy and money on your kids in ways that are extravagant, nobody is going to say to you ah, that's wasteful. Instead, you know what they say? They say that's a good parent. See, we can do certain things with no moderation, and the world applauds us for it. But when it comes to Jesus, if suddenly you spend all your time and money and energy on Jesus, for Jesus, for the gospel, suddenly it becomes a waste. Suddenly say, ah I mean, how many times have we seen highly gifted young men and women indicate that they're considering a vocation in ministry, that they're going to become missionaries and move away to the far-reaching corners of the earth. And we say, ah, but they're so gifted and so talented; it's like they're going to waste those talents by doing that. Why would you waste your talent going to Africa to be a missionary? I mean, how many times have we heard someone say, oh, you know, if he, he could have had a real career, he could have been, he could have been a blank. Whatever it is, fill in the blank. I think one of the reasons that Jesus says this to this woman wherever the gospel is preached, this story will be told, is so that wherever the gospel is preached throughout the whole world, it's going to serve as a reminder, as a sign to everybody, that there's simply no such thing as too much devotion to Jesus, and that nothing done for him is ever in waste.

So, Jesus, it tells us in verse number six, steps in and he stops all of this scolding. He says, Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? In other words, why are you giving her such a hard time? She has done a beautiful thing to me. Notice the disciples measured the value of her perfume, which is what they can see. And yet Jesus is, he's measuring the value of her faith, which they can't see. He says, for you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me with you. He's indicating that he's about to be gone. He's continued to try to prepare them for the fact that he is not going to be with them any longer. And again, here's another prediction of this coming right from his very mouth. Now here's the thing, I want you notice this, Jesus says something that often gets taken really out of context. You will always have the poor with me, whenever you want, you can do good for them. You won't always have me with you. We oftentimes hear people say, see, Jesus says you're always going to have the poor with you, so nothing we can do about it. They're always going to be around. But you know, that's not really what Jesus is really saying, is it? If you look at this, Jesus is not saying that the disciples should have no regard for the poor. And you know why he's not saying that? Because that would be a violation of what he has told them is the second most great commandment. What did he tell them back, just a couple of chapters ago in Mark 12:31? He says, the second

greatest commandment is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. To not have regard for the poor would be to violate that commandment. And they cannot do that because he's told him it's the second greatest commandment. What Jesus *is* saying is that they should place their regard for him even above their regard for the poor and for that matter, everyone else, because to not do that would be to have no regard for the first and greatest commandment which says this in Mark 12:29, the most important is 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul with all your mind with all your strength.' In essence, Jesus is allowing this woman to give him all of her heart and soul and mind and strength, because he recognizes that he is God in the present right there. And she has anointed him. And so, she has taken that which is most precious to her and given it to the one who was most precious to her. And in this way, what she's doing is she's demonstrating that she understands that Jesus is to be valued above everything else. Yes, the poor are to be loved and cared for, in obedience to the second greatest commandment. But Jesus is to be loved and worshipped in response to the first and great commandment.

Verse eight says, Jesus says to the disciples, she has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. Notice, she's done what she could. In other words, she gave everything she had just like the widow in Mark chapter 12. Jesus said of that woman, she put in everything she had to live on. Both of these women are models for us of what true devotion to God looks like. To the outsider, true devotion to God always looks like reckless waste. In reality, it's simply complete love and complete devotion. What looks like reckless waste to the outsider is really just someone who is living out the greatest commandment, which is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Jesus says she has anointed my body for burial. He interprets her actions as having a symbolism to them. She's anointing him for burial. Now, Jews didn't embalm people. And so, what they did was, as a sign of honor and respect they put spices and perfumes upon the body, and it showed that they respected them. And also, it covered up the stench that would come from a body that would decay without having been embalmed. The woman was not intentionally doing this because she was thinking to herself, oh, this is me preparing him for burial. But Jesus' mind at this point is consumed with everything related to his coming death in just a couple of days from now. And so, he sees everything through this lens, and we're going to come back to this later when we get to the death of Jesus and see that this did serve as a moment in which he was anointed for burial. This is just simply at this point another prediction by Jesus that he's going to die. Verse 9 says, truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her. Notice, it's not her name that's going to be remembered, in fact, Mark doesn't even give it, but rather how much she loved and valued Jesus. Her act of devotion to Jesus is what's going to be remembered. In fact, the very fact that I am talking about this woman's act of love and devotion to Jesus 2,000 years after this happened, validates what Jesus said. It validates that this is going to take place.

So, notice three things in this statement that Jesus makes that are implied about the gospel. He says, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she's done will be done, will be told, in memory of her. Notice first that you see there that Jesus is now equating the gospel with himself; when the gospel is proclaimed in the future, when all these events are complete, it's going to be about him and specifically,

it's going to be about his death and resurrection, because he connects her story to his death, and his death and her story to the gospel that's going to be proclaimed in the whole world. So, Jesus says first, look, the gospel is about me. But second, Jesus sees the gospel being proclaimed after his death. See because it's good news about him, it means that his death and his burial aren't going to be the final chapter in his life. In fact, there's going to be more, so it points to the resurrection. So, we see, hey, the gospel is about Jesus and it's about his death, and it's about his resurrection. And then the third thing is that the gospel is being proclaimed to the whole world, which means that Jesus sees himself not just as the good news for Israel, but he sees himself as the good news for everybody. In fact, this points then to his ascension and to his enthronement, because after his enthronement, it will be clear to all that he is the ruling Lord of the entire world. And so, Jesus sees himself as being what the gospel is about.

And so, then Mark turns back to this story and where it began in verses 1 and 2 with this plot to kill Jesus and he creates this sandwich effect. Judas, the one who was one of the twelve, this emphasizes that this betrayal comes from one who's closest to Jesus, goes to the chief priest in order to betray them. And when he heard, when they heard it, they were glad, and they promised to give him money. Matthew 26:16 tells us they give him 30 pieces of silver, and they sought an opportunity to betray him. Now Judas is looking for this chance, this opportunity. Now when you look at that, Mark doesn't tell us why Judas betrayed Jesus. But what he does make clear in the events that follow after this, is that the death of Jesus is actually God's sovereign purpose and plan. And therefore, Judas's motives in a sense are not really as important as God's motives. In fact, God's motives are to redeem the world through the death of Jesus. And so, we see that Judas intends something for harm, and yet God means it for good, which is something we see throughout all of scripture.

So, I want to kind of draw this together, and I want to really focus on some things I think are really important for our own hearts, alright? And so, I want to just kind of take a look at this story from a different angle here. And I want to ask, you know, just as you look at this you see this is a story that, as I said, is a drastic act of a woman, compared with this drastic act of this man Judas, and hers was an act of love and devotion, and his was one of despisement and betrayal. But I want to conclude this by then looking at that and asking three really important questions that I think that we all have to wrestle with. Every single one of us have to wrestle with these questions. First is this, number one is: You know, we all want to know, why would Judas despise and betray Jesus? I mean, this guy is like, part of his inner circle. Why would he do this? Um, I think there's a better question that we should ask after we see this story. And I think the better question we ought to ask is: How do we sometimes despise and betray Jesus? You see, that's the question that we really ought to get at, you know, because Judas is 2,000 years ago. He's done what he's done, and that's over. But isn't it fascinating we're always worried about what everybody else is doing? How come they don't do this? How come they do this? Why did they do that? And we're never really that interested in kind of doing some surgery on our own hearts and asking, why do I do this? Well, I think the simple answer to that question, why do we or, how do we sometimes betray Jesus? Is to just say, you know, hey, we do it whenever we falsely believe that there's someone or something greater than Jesus. And how often does that happen for us? In fact, whenever we falsely believe that there's someone or something better than Jesus,

then we falsely believe that someone or something will provide us with greater future, and a greater security. And so, we devote ourselves to that person or to that thing. In fact, whenever we falsely believe that there is someone or something that will provide us with greater joy and happiness, then guess what we do? We devote ourselves to that person and to that thing. And those actions, they betray Jesus. They betray Jesus because they communicate to others that he is common. They communicate that he's like everyone else and everything else, and therefore he is not worthy of my complete devotion. In fact, I will not waste my life for him. That's what they communicate.

Well, I then have to come back and ask the second question. The second question is this: What then could possibly cause us to live with the sort of love and devotion that this woman demonstrated? And I think the answer is simple and it's the opposite. It's the juxtaposition of the answer to the first question, and that's this: we're only going to do so when we come to believe that there is no one or nothing that is greater than Jesus. In fact, whenever we genuinely believe that Jesus will provide us with the greatest future and security, we will devote ourselves completely to him. Whenever we believe that Jesus will provide us with the greatest joy and happiness, we'll devote ourselves completely to him. See these actions, rather than betraying Jesus, these actions magnify Jesus because they communicate to others that Jesus is not common. In fact, he's not like anyone else or anything else. Therefore, he is actually worthy of my complete devotion. And I will not waste my life on anyone or anything else, but in fact will give it completely to him.

So, I think that leads to the third and final question that I want to ask, which I think is the most important question that we have to wrestle with in our lives: if Jesus is this glorious, if Jesus is this worthy of all glory on... I mean, if we're talking about someone who is the most glorious person, the most glorious being, the most glorious thing, in all the universe, and he's this worthy of all honor, and all glory, and all praise, and all devotion, and all love, and all sacrifice; if he's that magnificent, then why would he waste his life for me? See, that's the real question I should be asking. The real question I should be asking is, why would Jesus waste his life dying for a sinner like me? In Mark 14:3 it says that the woman poured out her perfume upon him, and the question that got asked was, why waste this? But in the end of this chapter, in fact, just twenty-one verses later, in verse 24 of this chapter, Jesus will say that he's going to pour out his own blood for you and me. This is when we should be asking the question, why waste this? That's when the question ought to be asked. In fact, there's only one way that we can actually get at the answer to that question. And it's to come right back to something that we all have heard at some point in our life and maybe just didn't understand the significance and the drastic nature of this act. For John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that he gave his only son. She had only one family heirloom that could provide a future and a security for her. She had only one alabaster flask filled with one large sum of costly oil that could guarantee her a future, and God had only one son that could guarantee us a future. She, in an act of love and devotion, pours out the oil for this man whom she loves. And Jesus, in a great act of love and devotion to his Father, pours out his blood for us, because the Father so loved the world that he was willing to give the Son for us, and Jesus, in his devotion to the Father, and the Father in his devotion to the Son, and the Holy Spirit in its devotion to the Father and the Son, will then come and redeem us by sealing our hearts unto the day of redemption. 1 John 3:16 says, by this we know love, that he laid down his life for



us. You see, it's only really when I stand in amazement, in a sense, before the cross of Jesus, standing with a long gaze upon Christ pouring out his blood for my sins, that I realize that this uncommon love for me that he demonstrated, this uncommon love, led him to say, you know, I'm willing to take Mark's sins upon me. Mark doesn't deserve my love and devotion. Mark doesn't deserve my blood poured out for him. Unlike Jesus who deserved this woman's love and affection. He deserved all that she had poured out for him. But Jesus looks at me and he looks at you and he says, you don't deserve my love and affection. You don't deserve my blood poured out. In fact, if it wasn't for my love and devotion, then my blood poured out would be a waste. It's only because the Holy Spirit will regenerate you and cause you to come alive and worship and praise me that my blood will not be wasted upon you. When I realized that he was willing to take my sins upon himself, that he was willing to be judged for me, that he was willing to die for me, that he was willing to be buried for me, raised from the dead for me, that I might live with him forever, it's only then, only then, that my affections will truly be captured. It is only then, that my heart will genuinely be transformed. And then and only then will I be willing, with great joy, to devote my whole life to him, even to the extent that others, like these people, will deem my devotion to him to be extravagant, and even wasteful. In fact, it's only the gospel in which Jesus is proclaimed not just to some doer of nice miracles, or some guy who taught some nice things, but rather as the glorious one through whom the world was made, coming in humility and in love to die for me, in which I then see him on the cross as magnificent and glorious as he genuinely is. And I see me before the cross, as miserable and as sinful as I actually am, in humility staring upon one who has no business giving his life, no business pouring out his blood for me, in the sheer sense of me deserving it or not, but rather as one who is undeserving watching this one who is deserving of everything give to me all that he deserves, not what I deserve. It's only in this moment, only in this moment that I will look and say, oh, my goodness, oh my goodness, Jesus, you're worthy of everything that I have. You are worthy of all my praise. You are worthy of all my affection. I will, I will give everything I have to you, my freedom and security, my future, my security, it's in you, my love, my devotion, it all belongs to you.

You see, you have got to ask yourself, has the gospel transformed your heart that way? I mean, have you ever been so mesmerized by the beauty of Christ and his sacrificial love for you in such a way that your affections have been captured by him and you stand before him amazed, and you pour out your life for him? And others say I've never seen such devotion, and others say it's kind of, he gives everything to Jesus. The outsiders call it wasteful. But Jesus, being the ultimate insider, says no, it's true love and devotion. I want you to stand amazed before him, I want you to fall at his feet like the woman. Pour out all your love and devotion upon him. Lose your life to him in order that you might really live. Recognize that there is no one, and there is nothing in this world, that is as worthy of a life spent in devotion to it, as he is. So, stand before him mesmerized realizing all that he's done for you.

Let's pray together. Lord, thank you for Jesus giving his life for our sins. Thank you for his faithfulness to you, his love and devotion to you, into the plan that you had in place before the beginning of the world, that Christ would die for us. Lord I pray that there are people who are listening right now who have never quite understood what a tremendous act the cross actually was. They've never stood before the cross, mesmerized by the beauty of Jesus. They've never in that moment looking at the cross,

asked on the one hand oh, what are the ways that I have betrayed Jesus? While on the other hand, asking the other question which is oh, and as I look at the cross, what else in this world should command my devotion like this one who is before me? Lord would you do work in our hearts today, may your holy spirit Lord, redeem those who are lost, regenerate unbelievers this morning, cause the scales to fall from their eyes that they might look upon Christ and live. Look to Christ and live this morning. Lord for those of us who have been born again into the Kingdom of Jesus and have somehow Lord grown cold in our affection for him, Lord for those of us this morning who may have at one time in our life seen Christs' beauty and had been willing to give everything to him suddenly Lord without realizing it begun to look upon him as common, and as everything else, Lord, this morning may our hearts be captured by how uncommon he is. How, unlike anyone else he is, how worthy of all of our affection he is. And Lord, may we give to him the extravagant love and devotion that he deserves, empower us by your Holy Spirit to that end, we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen. Amen.